THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHRIRAM CHAUHAN): (a) to (d) No, Sir. However, a High Level Committee has been constituted to formulate a Long Term Grain Policy. The Terms of Reference of the said Committee include matters relating to Minimum Support Price and price support operations, functioning of Public Distribution System policy regarding buffer stocks. Open Market Intervention and Export/Import, allocation of foodgrains for rural development programmes and other welfare programmes and FCI related issues. The Committee is expected to finalise its report by May, 2001.

Improvement of PDS in Himachal Pradesh

3644. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to take necessary steps to improve Public Distribution System in Himachal Pradesh specially in far flung hilly and snow bound areas; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHRIRAM CHAUHAN): (a) and (b) Under the Public Distribution System (PDS), the Central Government has assumed responsibility for procurement and supply of essential commodities *viz.* wheat, rice, levy sugar, imported edible oils and kerosene upto the designated depots for further distribution by the State Governments to the consumers.

Under the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) the State Government is distributing 10 kg. of rice and 10 kg. of wheat per BPL family per month. As reported by the Government of Himachal Pradesh, the State Government is also providing wheat atta in lieu of wheat under the TPDS per the choice of the consumers.

The distribution of essential commodities to the consumers is being made through a network of 3935 fair price shops, out of which 184

fair price shops are functioning in snow bound tribal areas. In these areas the supply of foodgrains and other essential commodities are arranged well before the closure of passes by snow and adequate storage arrangements have been made.

In order to improve the functioning of the PDS, Vigilance Committees under the Chairmanship of the Pradhan of the respective Gram Panchayats have been formed at each fair price shop level and the Panchayati Raj Institutions have also been empowered to oversee/supervise the functioning of the fair price shops.

Requirement of edible oils

3645. SHRIMATI BASANTI SARMA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of requirement of edible oils in each State particularly in Assam;

(b) whether any quota has been fixed by Government in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the details of quantity of edible oil provided to Assam during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHRIRAM CHAUHAN): (a) to (d) A Statement indicating demand of edible oils for Public Distribution System received from various State Governments/Union Territories and allocation thereof during the last three years is attached. (*See* below) Since no demand for edible oils for PDS has been received from the State Government of Assam during the last three years, no allocation were made to them during the said period. No quota has been fixed for allocation of edible oils for PDS.